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FILE COPY

6 Lessons Learned, HEADQUARTERS, 97TH ARTILLERY GROUP (AD) [u] 11
APO San Francisco 96307

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SUBJECT: Operational Report, [redacted] for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966. (RCS CSGPO-28 (RI))(U) 11 10 Aug 1966

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TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Forces Development
Department of the Army
(ACSFOR, DA)
Washington, D.C. 20310

DDC
MAY 22 1968
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1. (U) The initial command report submitted by this organization was for the period 1 July 1965 to 30 September 1965. Subsequent reports were submitted for the period 1 October 1965 through 31 December 1965 and 1 January 1966 through 30 April 1966.

2. (U) Organization for Combat:

UNIT	COMMANDER
HQ, 97th Artillery Group (AD)	Col Stephen C. Buchanan
6th Battalion, 56th Artillery	Lt Col James H. Hollis
6th Battalion, 71st Artillery	Lt Col Rowlan L. Miller
79th Ordnance Detachment (GMS)(HAWK)	Maj Al S. Medlock Maj Duane D. Miller
459th Signal Detachment (AD Sys Comm)	1st Lt William R. Weinreich

3. (U) This operational report incorporates activities and recommendations from the two assigned detachments. The two battalions assigned submit reports under separate cover.

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SECTION I. (C) Significant Organization or Unit Activities:

1. (C) General

a. This report covers the period 1 May 1966 through 31 July 1966. During the period, all elements continued to direct their efforts toward improving both tactical and administrative areas, and improving their tactical proficiency in preparation for the Annual Service practice which is to be conducted at the end of September. No engagements were recorded against hostile aircraft.

b. During this period, the first major change of command occurred since 5 January 1966. Major Al S. Medlock, who had been commanding the 79th Ordnance Detachment, departed for CONUS on 24 July and was replaced by Major Duane D. Miller. This command assignment is only an interim measure. The command will, in the near future, be turned over to an Ordnance Officer.

c. During the month of July, construction work began on two new tactical sites which are to be occupied by tactical firing batteries.

(1) In the Saigon area, a site was finally approved for A Battery of the 56th Artillery. The 159th Engineers are supporting this project and work is proceeding satisfactorily. It is anticipated that the battery will move on or about 1 September 1966.

(2) The anticipated starting date of preparing Hon Tre Island (Nha Trang) for occupancy by Btry C of the 71st Artillery was delayed for over one month, but finally initiated by the 864th Engineers during July. The Beneficial Occupancy Date (BOD) for this site is now projected for 30 September 1966.

d. Site improvement has continued at all batteries, and definite improvement can be noted, both where contract or engineering support has been available, and in areas where it has been strictly "self-help". All units now have semi-permanent mess halls, administrative buildings and maintenance facilities. Several are completely housed in semi-permanent buildings. The self-help program has been particularly successful. All units have demonstrated that, given the materials and plans, a well organized, well constructed camp will materialize.

e. Distinguished visitors during the period of this report included:

<u>VISITOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DATE OF VISIT</u>
Maj Gen Forsythe	AC of S, G-3, USARPAC	2 May 66
Brig Gen Mount	Dep C of S, USARV	10 May 66
Maj Gen Tillson	AC of S, J-3, MACV	16 Jun 66
Brig Gen Moore	PM, USARV	22 Jun 66

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Lt Gen Engler	Dep CG, USARV	22 Jun 66
Brig Gen Crittenberger	II FFV Arty Cdr	23 Jun 66
Maj Gen Davidson	Designate CG USAC & GS Col	29 Jun 66
Col Dan R Davis	Sys Spt Div Chief	15 Jul 66
	HAWK Project Manager MICON	

f. During the period 27-29 June, the 6th Battalion, 71st Artillery was inspected by the Inspector General USARV. Although no adjectival rating was awarded, the battalion received many favorable comments from the I.G. and later received a letter from the Deputy Commanding General USARV commending them for their fine showing. The Group Headquarters, 79th Ordnance Det and 459th Signal Det are scheduled to be inspected by the I.G. during the period 1-3 August. This inspection will complete all elements of the Group for 1966.

g. During the period of this report, increased emphasis was placed on the savings bond program. At the beginning of the period approximately 72% of the personnel assigned to the Group were participating. By 31 July, 2250 of the assigned 2318 were participating for a percentage rate of 97 percent. Emphasis will continue to be placed on maintaining a high percentage in this program.

h. 79th Ordnance Detachment. This unit has continued to accomplish both its supply and maintenance mission in a highly superior manner.

(1) Work has continued on improving the compound. Significant developments in this program have been; (1) surfacing and ditching of all roads, (2) installation of culverts and improvement of drainage, (3) sand-bagging of all tents, (4) construction of a twelve foot high barbed wire fence - backed with concertina wire - around the entire perimeter, (5) erection of steel gates at both entrances. It is expected that construction of the warehouses and administrative buildings, which have been let on civilian contract, will begin in late August.

(2) Very few problems have been encountered in working new replacements into the operation of the detachment. The majority have recently been school trained and have an acceptable knowledge of their duties. This statement is also true of those individuals who have transferred to the 79th from other commands. The only critical MCS shortage which presently exists is 23T and some improvement has taken place.

(3) A decrease in zero balances has resulted in better support for the customer. The depot has decreased the zero balance from 541 lines at the end of the previous quarter to 363 lines at the close of operations on 31 July 1966. There continues to be an improvement in the area of requisitions received that match the depot ASL. The average shop reorder time during this period for 02 priority is nine (9) days and for 05 priority 17 days. This figure is the number of days which elapse from the date of requisition to the date of receipt of material.

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(4) General Support Maintenance Operations: The maintenance facility did not experience any significant changes during the period. A "clean room" was completed for the purpose of testing and repairing the high voltage power supply for the Hawk High Power Illuminator. It was discovered that the maintenance facility could effectively repair many pieces of test equipment and other components which were previously sent to property disposal. This was also experienced in some of the unserviceable returns which were formerly sent to CONUS as unserviceable excesses. These items are repaired and returned to depot stock.

1. 459th Signal Detachment. During the period of this report, the unit has worked toward the accomplishment of its mission, improving the billeting and working areas and improving physical security.

(1) Consolidation of systems as reported in the previous report has been accomplished. With the communication center located in the same building as signal maintenance and the Detachment Headquarters, personnel utilization and control of systems has been greatly enhanced.

(2) Inexperienced replacements continue to arrive in this unit. These personnel (switchboard operators) require many hours of supervised on-the-job training in order to function effectively. This situation is aggravated by the fact that personnel in MOS 31M (VHF and Carrier operator), a critically short MOS, must be used to train these individuals.

(3) Personnel shortages have been alleviated in some MOS's. However, MOS 31M, both operator and team chief, is critically short and future losses will gravely effect the operational efficiency of the unit. Replacements received during this quarter have been switchboard operators and signal maintenance personnel. These replacements are presently undergoing CJT and cross training on teletype, patch panel and wire installation. It is not possible to train this type individual in the duties of a VHF and Carrier (MOS 31M) Operator.

(4) A problem in procurement of starters and magnetos for generator SF-10-0-ND arose when the maintenance support activity discontinued direct exchange of these items. Magnetos in most instances are not repairable and therefore must be requisitioned. Because they have been direct exchange items in the past they were not added to the unit's PLL. This unit presently has three (3) generators deadlined awaiting magnetos.

2. (C) Intelligence activities

a. The activities of the S2 section, 97th Artillery Group (AD), continued to be devoted to assuring that intelligence data was constantly updated, conducting intelligence briefings on the enemy air order of battle, distributing classified documents and processing personnel security applications.

b. Another activity through the period was distribution of maps to various staff sections and subordinate units.

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c. Regularly scheduled classified message center trips to higher headquarters were curtailed to some extent due to the establishment of a courier service in the Tan Son Nhut area. However, messages with immediate precedence, which must be picked up as soon as possible, increased and the number of actual trips to the message center did not decrease over the period.

d. The S2 Section published a security regulation during the period which combined requirements of higher headquarters into a single publication. This regulation emphasized the requirements which should be of particular interest to air defense units and clarified general security procedures. As a result of this regulation, the overall security program has shown considerable improvement.

e. The clearance processing remained at approximately the same level as last period. There was no large change in the rate of turnover of personnel.

3. (C) Operations and Training

a. On 28 May of this year, 7th Air Force established a new Control and Reporting (CRC) facility at Tan Son Nhut Air Base. This greatly enlarged and improved facility provided space to be utilized by the 97th Group. Since this headquarters does not have sufficient personnel to man both an Army Air Defense Command Post (AADCP) and a CRC section, and considering the fact that the group is not equipped with the materiel necessary to control the firing sections electronically, the decision was made to collocate the AADCP with the Air Force CRC. The old AADCP building was, therefore, abandoned on 28 May, the day on which the section became operational in the new building.

This change in operation has proven advantageous in every respect, but of particular importance is the facility and speed with which targets can be plotted and identified. The coordination effected within the CRC between Air Force and Army Air Defense Controllers has proven of material benefit to both, as Army organic radars are frequently used to provide aircraft identification to the Air Force. After only two months of activity it has become obvious that this collocation has resulted in a more efficient air defense operation.

b. During the reporting period, twelve Operational Readiness Evaluations (ORE) were conducted by the Group ORE team. Eleven units were rated combat ready with ratings varying from Highly Superior to Satisfactory. One battery was rated unsatisfactory due to equipment problems.

c. On 1 June 1966, Battery C, 6th Battalion, 71st Artillery moved from its initial position on the Cam Rhan Peninsula CP054323 to a new location at coordinates CP056316. The move which neither degraded nor improved the defense, was required when the Air Force decided to construct an additional runway and expand its facilities.

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d. On 6 July 1966 construction was initiated on the Hon Tre Island site (Vic Na Trang). Since this facility is to be occupied jointly by the air force, army artillery, army signal and army transportation, it was necessary that all actions be coordinated. Since the 6th Battalion, 71st Artillery - an element of 97th Group - will deploy the largest body of troops to the area and they have been given highest priority for occupancy, they have been delegated as the coordinating unit. Several meetings have been conducted at 97th Group with all interested units attending. Plans for the administration of the island have been developed and tactical sites assigned to the satisfaction of all. It is expected that the island will be occupied on or about 30 September.

4. (C) Personnel and Administrative Activities

a. Personnel losses during the period of this report were 15 officers and 245 EM. Gains for the same period were 62 officers and 517 EM. There has continued to be substantial increase in most of the common MOS skills, however there still is a shortage in hard skill MOS's. Three school trained EM possessing MOS 23T arrived during this period which helped to alleviate to some extent one of our critical problem areas, however, a shortage in this MOS still exists. DA has indicated that there is a critical shortage world wide. The Group evolved throughout the period to a state where it is presently double staffed in most of the Senior NCO and officer positions. This is due to the fact that replacements had, 6 months ago, been requisitioned in accordance with a USARV policy designed to spread our losses over a 90 day period and diminish the effects of the rotational hump. This program was disapproved by DA, as indicated in our last report, and our request that availability dates on these individuals be moved up to August and September was likewise disapproved by DA.

b. Morale has continued to remain high. Promotion allocations have increased during this period mainly in the Senior NCO grades. This has allowed the group to promote many of its outstanding NCO's. R&R quotas have continued at an excellent rate. Our first quotas for R&R in Hawaii were received in July. Special Service issues have continued at a satisfactory rate. A variety of water sporting goods was issued to the units in the Cam Ranh Bay - Nha Trang area, the only area in group where they can be utilized.

c. Both battalions received the annual I.G. Inspection, and although adjectival ratings are not given, remarks were very complimentary. Both units received letters from Lt. Gen. Jean Engler commending them on the results of their inspection. They are the only units in Vietnam to have received such a letter as of this time.

d. The Civic Action Program has continued to be emphasized within the Group Headquarters and assigned battalions. Under the USARV Civic Action Sanitation Project the group provided 2½ ton trucks, a scooploader, and drivers for the trash and refuse collection in Saigon.

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e. Units continue to employ Vietnamese domestic labor at an average wage of seventy-five piastres per day.

f. During the reporting period, the Group processed the following awards:

Bronze Star	19
Army Commendation Medal	107
Air Medal	2
Air Force Commendation Medal	4
Purple Heart	1
Soldiers Medal	1

5. (C) Logistical Activities

a. General: There has been a continual and steady improvement in all aspects of logistics during the reporting period. Much emphasis is still required at all levels, by both command and technical supervisory personnel, to insure that everything possible is being done to provide timely and adequate support of the tactical and administrative mission.

b. Supply:

(1) Class I supply continues to be good, considering port discharge problems and the lack of adequate in-country cold storage facilities.

(a) Units are experiencing expensive waste in the fresh vegetable line, particularly potatoes, which arrive at the port in excessively large quantities. Troop messes receive forced issue, far in excess of their requirements and their ability to preserve in storage. The units cannot consume them before they rot and then they must do without.

(b) Potable ice receipts are still insufficient and ice machines are still not available.

(2) Class II & IV activities continue to improve slowly, but require a bold and active management program to rid the system of costly bottlenecks.

(a) Requisitions with Issue Priority Designators (IPD) 02 and 05, which cannot be filled from the supporting supply activity are passed to the 2nd Logistical Command, Okinawa. Evidently no attempt is made to fill the demand if stocks should be received in response to a station-stock requisition.

(b) Due-in EAM status cards and issue documents are being received which do not perpetuate the requisitioner's document number. This necessitates extensive research of the document register in an effort to locate a demand for the FSN received.

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(c) Due-in machine listings were received during this report period, but only covered IPD 12 and 17, excluding those more urgently required items requisitioned with IPDs 02 and 05.

(d) In view of the situations described in (a) and (c) above, it is assumed that no record of demands is maintained at the supporting supply activity for items requisitioned with IPD 02 and 05.

(e) Repair Parts (PLL/ASL):

1 Theater-common repair parts requisition fill has increased from 20% to 32% fill, but an ever increasing backlog of due-ins for PLL/ASL items, presently at zero balance, has created a greater demand for Red Ball Express service for equipment deadline parts resupply. The PLL/ASL for non-Hawk System repair parts in the 6th Bn, 71st Arty has gone from a status of 5% lines at zero balance in October 1965, to 29% of the total authorized lines at zero balance. The greatest lack of fill has been experienced in engineer and signal repair parts, with only 15% fill. The 6th Bn, 56th Arty situation is much better, with Saigon Support Command providing close to 60% fill. Both battalions have been following an aggressive supply replenishment program with appropriate follow-up action.

2 Hawk System repair parts supply, by the 79th Ordnance Detachment (GM/GS) parts depot, has shown continued improvement from 78% fill in April 1966 to 82% fill in July 1966.

(f) Office and housekeeping supplies are now available in adequate quantities through the Self-Service Supply Center, which is extremely well organized and managed.

(g) There is no shortage of dog food at the present time, but the quality of the food is questionable and requires close inspection. Glass, boll weevils, larvae and other foreign matter have been found in the food. The veterinarians are aware of the problem and have taken action to establish tighter quality controls and the use of specialized barrier packaging to preclude penetration by insects.

(h) Paint for equipment protection continues in short supply.

(i) POM requisitioned items, ordered on 21 Aug 65, continue to arrive in piecemeal fashion. On 21 July 1966 this headquarters received a POM Requisition Status Listing from the U.S. Army Logistic Control Office, Pacific, Ft. Mason, California which provided shipping status, where available, on all filled demands. Ft. Mason has initiated tracer action on all open requisitions.

(j) The medium and large general purpose tents used for billets, storage, maintenance, mess and administration began to rot beyond repair during this period. This is attributed to constant exposure to the severe tropical elements. Replacement tents are very difficult to obtain.

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This means that some units are experiencing an overcrowding of personnel which will continue until new tents are issued or buildings constructed.

(k) Class IV construction and barrier materials are still in relatively short supply, though much improvement has been experienced in this area.

(3) Class III support has continued to be excellent.

(a) Arrangements have been made by the Class III Officer, 1st Logistical Command to have all diesel fuel issued to air defense units specially filtered, similar to the procedures for AVGAS. It is anticipated that this will preclude those generator failures which have been occasioned by contaminated fuel. All Hawk units have now been incorporated into the monthly petroleum quality surveillance, and technical liaison advisory visits are conducted by petroleum laboratory personnel from the 1st Logistical Command.

(b) To enable units of this command to comply with classified USARV message, cite AVD-MD 50279, Subject: Emergency POL Supply Plan (U), 21 Jan 66, units of this command should be equipped with collapsible fabric petroleum tanks in lieu of the pods presently on hand.

(4) Class V support has continued to be satisfactory.

c. Maintenance:

(1) Non-HAWK equipment:

(a) Units have begun to experience an increase in non-operational equipment (non-HAWK) which is directly attributable to the shortage of repair parts. (See para b(2)(c)1 above)

(b) Field Maintenance support has shown continuous improvement with improved facilities and better management, however, engineer generator maintenance still suffers from lack of adequate parts stockage and technically qualified personnel.

(c) Controlled substitution has been effected, when necessary, to keep the maximum amount of equipment operational.

(d) Red Ball Express has been very effective in providing equipment deadline parts, when they were not available in the theater supply system.

(2) Hawk System organizational and field maintenance has shown additional improvement due to greater demand fill (ref para b(2)(c)1 above).

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d. Real Estate:

(1) Land: MACV and Joint General Staff approvals have now been granted on all real estate required by presently assigned organizations. Requests for land in new geographical areas are pending approval.

(2) Buildings: A request for renewal of the lease on the Group Headquarters offices and building facility was submitted to real estate authorities in July. The present lease will expire 26 September.

e. Semi-Permanent Site Development (MCA):

(1) Engineer troop construction, assisted to a great extent by unit self-help, has progressed rapidly where adequate personnel, equipment and materials are available. Progress is satisfactory at HQ, A and D Btrys, 6th Bn, 56th Arty and HQ, A, B, and D Btrys, 6th Bn, 71st Arty. Nothing has been done for site development of Btry B, 6th Bn, 56th Arty because the required engineer troop support has not been made available due to their commitments to higher priority projects. The beneficial occupancy date (BOD) has been slipped from 15 March 1966 to 31 October 1966.

(2) Contracted construction at Btry C, 6th Bn, 56th Arty commenced in July and is going ahead very rapidly. Work has not yet commenced at the 79th Ord and 459th Sig Dots area, where the warehouse (70' X 140') for parts storage has been given first priority.

f. Transportation:

(1) Eyo Field Forces Vietnam (IFFV) at Nha Trang has recently been assigned the mission of providing the 6th Bn, 71st Arty with on-call aerial re-supply transportation support. This support has long been required. It will transport maintenance personnel, parts and deadlined equipment 24 hours per day between the Bn Hqs at Cam Ranh Bay and Btry D located at Nha Trang.

SECTION II. Lessons Learned and Commanders Recommendations

1. Lessons Learned:

a. Operations

Aircraft Detection and Identification

Item: Aircraft Detection and Identification Utilizing HAWK System Radars

Discussion: Location and capabilities of HAWK system radars will in some cases allow surveillance in areas where US Air Force surveillance radars are limited by masking, ground clutter or electronic "dead zones". Due to this situation, there have been numerous instances, especially in the Cam Ranh Bay - Nha Trang area, where HAWK aided the US Air Force in detection and

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identification of aircraft. Due primarily to the increased coordination which has resulted from the AF/ADA collocation in the CRC, the Air Force movement and identification section has a better understanding of the HAWK radar capabilities; as a result, HAWK is frequently called upon to aid in surveillance and interrogation of unidentified aircraft. In a majority of the cases, the response from the HAWK units has allowed accurate and timely identification, thereby precluding the necessity for scramble of interceptors to make visual identification. This situation has provided dollar savings in the case of the Air Force, and has added to the prestige of the HAWK System.

Observation: Emphasis must be given to the use of HAWK radars in air defense surveillance and identification in AF/ADA joint air defense operations. Furthermore, emphasis must be placed on maintenance of HAWK acquisition/IFF capabilities, and on training of operators in IFF techniques, to insure that the HAWK system will respond to requests in this area of air defense operations.

b. Intelligence

Item: Map Storage

Discussion: Prior to departure from CONUS this section was issued map coverage in at least five copies of all of South Vietnam. Experience has shown that air defense units require relatively few maps and these of particular areas only. Further, map depots in Vietnam have adequate map coverage for immediate distribution to all units.

Observation: Air Defense units to be deployed to Vietnam should be issued maps in CONUS only of the areas where they are to be deployed. Additional maps, if needed upon arrival, could be drawn from map depots.

c. Logistics

Item: Rusting of Weapons

Discussion: A weapons storage facility equipped with a heating lamp will help combat corrosion of stored weapons. However, finger prints left on a weapon will corrode, even under these conditions, within a twenty-four hour period.

Observation: After cleaning a weapon, personnel should be instructed to wipe all finger prints from metal surfaces with an oily rag.

Item: Chassis Deterioration

Discussion: Many chassis and electronic components stored in the depot warehouse are not in depot sealed packages. Moisture and dust join together to quickly deteriorate electrical components. Plastic bags and paper sacks

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have been useful both in protecting these components from the elements and also protecting small parts from loss during shipment.

Observation: This is not an authorized sealed package but it has proven successful in all respects in the depot.

Item: Terrain Stability

Discussion: This unit moved into the present location approximately ten (10) months ago during the monsoon season. Mud and water on the site was about one (1) foot deep. The terrain was incapable of supporting equipment of any considerable weight. After the monsoon season was over the site was graded and large ditches were dug forming a satisfactory drainage network. The earth around the Tan Son Nhut area is such that if well drained it will remain firm. At present even after a month of considerable rain the terrain which is well drained is fully capable of supporting heavy equipment. In heavily used areas small crushed rock is all that is needed to prevent unpassable mud.

Observation: This solution may not be practical in all areas but has proven quite successful in the Saigon area.

d. Other

Maintenance Program - HAWK

Item: Contingency Maintenance Plans

Discussion: Due to the increased state of defense readiness during the reporting period, it was deemed necessary to place all units of the HAWK defense on a 5-minute state of alert for extended periods. Because no time was allowed to release units for scheduled maintenance, program revisions were necessary to insure the increased state of alert could be maintained.

Observation: To preclude unnecessary time delays and equipment downtime, a contingency maintenance program should be prepared by all units. This will allow for maximum maintenance with minimum confusion during periods of sustained high states of alert.

2. (C) Commanders Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

The MTOE No. 44-12E submitted by this headquarters on 19 December 1965 be approved without delay. The 97th Artillery Group was not organized under an existing TO&E. TO&E 44-12E was the basis for organization, but only portions of five paragraphs were authorized, and these were modified and changed. This authorization did not provide sufficient personnel or equipment to adequately meet the needs of the defense. This group serves both as a tactical

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headquarters and as a major administrative command under USARV. The changes incorporated in this MTOE are essential to the group's mission. The additions of the Automatic Fire Distribution System and the Defense Acquisition Radar will greatly improve the air defense posture of Vietnam. The MTOE was approved by USARPAC and forwarded to DA in February 1966. No report of any action taken by DA has been received by this command.

Stephen C. Buchanan

STEPHEN C. BUCHANAN
Colonel, Artillery
Commanding